



After Hours

William
Frederick Feld S.J.



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AFTER HOURS

By WILLIAM
FREDERICK FELD
S.J.



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Skeins of Fancy

In the Plush Armchair

LITTLE NELL in the firelight's glare,
Lolled in the dear old plush armchair;
And playful shadows frolicked round
Here and there with never a sound.

Little Nell with the sunny face,
The rich brown curls, and the nameless grace,
Fell asleep in the old armchair,
Smiling down on its burden fair.

Would you know what the old chair said,
As it gazed on the little curly head?
It tenderly spake with a tearful smile,
As old sad thoughts came home the while:

"The years are long, but the years go by,
And the young grow up, while the old must die;
And there's never in life a guarantee
That its stream shall glide on peacefully;

“And whether come joy, or whether come woe
To thee, little maid, only God can know ;
But the lustre of purity on thy brow,
Angels keep it as bright as now !

“Angels keep it as fair and bright
As it rests on my bosom here to-night ;
For nothing is half so sweet to me
As the couch I give to innocency.”

Across the Bay

HERE on this cliff stand thou with me and gaze
Down on the huddled waters while the rays
From yonder stalwart, cheery lighthouse-tower
Pour on the bay their soft and silken shower.
No truant breeze to fret the tide nor stir:
Sweet silence speaks and silence answers her.
Calm as with mystic calm the waters are:
Not always so these waters round the bar;

For when thunders crash
And levins flash
O'er the panic herds of the sea;
And breakers dash
With a swirling splash
Far up on the great stone quay;

When the ship o' the wave
Is the Storm King's slave;
And he snorts in his madcap glee;
And the seaman brave
Sees yawning grave
In gorge of the tossing sea;

Oh, then yon light
Gleams starry bright,—
 Emblem of hope and cheer;
Leads from the night,—
Out o' the fight,—
 Into the haven clear.

A blessing on thee, watch-tower, brave and bold!
Fit symbol thou for souls of princely mould,
That scatter benedictions as they go,
And deem it gain to succor human woe.
We style them heroes, and in sooth 'tis well,
Whose deeds the angels pause to chronicle.

Hail, Kindly Cedars! Hail!

OH, here's a glee to the cedars,
Our staunch old friends and true.
What boots the snow, when the wild winds blow;
For never a change do the cedars know
All the long years through.

And here's a lilt to the cedars,
Sturdy of frame and mien.
Where the lordly oak tree's pride is fled;
And he stares as a Gorgon, stark and dead,
There be the cedars green.

A toss of my cap to the cedars,
The lovingest trees that be.
The time tides roll and the seasons veer,
Yet tender, sweeter year by year,
My cedars are to me.

A parting word to the cedars,
For a friend of the cedars I.
They'll give in death what in life they gave,
When they keep their vigils near the grave
Where under the sod I lie.

The Shelter Seekers

YEARS ago while the moon rained down
A silver shower on Bethlehem town,

And the earth lay pranked in wintry dress
Of furs all white in their loveliness;

And crisp, chill winds from the northland blew,
As it is their surly wont to do;—

In the hush of eve long years ago,
Seeking a rooftree from the snow,

Two weary, footsore pilgrims came.
By many a door in God's sweet name

He craved for the Lady shelter's boon,
'Neath the silent gaze of the queenly moon.

O surely none could say them nay!
Was this not driving Heaven away?

Shelter he craved for the Lady there,
With the angel face and the winsome air ;

But never a hearth did welcome them
'Mong the townsfolk there in Bethlehem ;

And never a word spake they, may be,
To blunt their cold discourtesy ;

And none of the townsfolk ever knew
Who at their doors did knock and sue ;

Just one little star had a great delight,
'Twould tryst by the blessed crib that night ;

But the sad-eyed moon did say "Amen !
They shall not pass this way again !"

The Storm King

HE comes with flaunting banners high,
A lurid wraith in yonder sky.
Deep rumblings tell me he is near;
And well I watch with straining ear;
While vesper chime from yonder bell
Floats velvet tone athwart the dell.

The blast veers north; the hush dissolves;
The hurtling vanguard swift revolves.
A tumult rives the atmosphere;
Whelmed nature crouches as with fear.
The little warblers quickly fly
To shelt'ring limb or covert nigh.

The storm is on, down pours the rain;
Like flail to lash my window pane.
The shutters creak with ghostly sound,
As 'twere doomed spirits stalked around.
One cannot see the light of day;
Cimmerian dark owns despot sway.

He roars,—the Storm King,—terribly;
And wildly through heaven's canopy,
He tears and rages, howls and shrieks;
And strews the sky with jagged streaks;
Making the coward trees bend so,
Well-nigh they sweep the turf below.

The roar and din have passed away;
And golden peace succeeds the fray.
Fast flees the rout to distant hills;
While sundarts glint on myriad rills.
The swift mounts up in dizzy flight
To hail the new born sky's delight.

Anon sweet Hesper, jeweled queen,
Bursts out upon the twilight scene.
Some ling'ring remnants of display
Still glorify the bygone day.
And so life's storms oft disappear,
When calm new found is doubly dear.

The Brook

FLOW on, dear brooklet,
So sweetly,
So fleetly!
On by green nooklet,
Wouldst scarce let me look, yet
Mine eye sees thee well.

Spurning the shoulder—
While springing
And singing,—
Of cairn and of boulder,
Where mossy oaks moulder
On strand in the dell.

Whirling and dashing
Now hither,
Now thither,
Where fishes dart flashing,
And wild birds go splashing
In sport all the day.

Time cannot stay thee
From dancing
And glancing:
Nor foe e'er dismay thee,
Nor aught e'er delay thee
At all on thy way.

Willow down bending
Seems weeping
And keeping
Up ever lamenting
The wavelets' tormenting
As onward they roam.

Ever in motion
'Tis going
And flowing
With never a notion
Of peace till the ocean
Welcomes thee home.

Song of the Night

'TIS a night too lovely for slumber,—
Why dream such a night away?
The Fairies are out in the open;
And moonbeams dance on the bay.

The cricket snug hid in his corner,
Chirps on to his soul's content;
While the Brownies leap and tumble
In frolicsome merriment.

By yonder purling brooklet,
Where waist-high sedges grow,
The bullfrog sits demurely,
Chanting his deep basso.

The watchdog bays in his kennel;
The owl hoots shrill to the moon;
While chanticlear greets his neighbor,
Afar over vale and dune.

And I hear strange word of mourning,—
Weary, and weird, and slow :
'Tis the whip-poor-will's song so lonely,
Upborne from the glen below.

Eleven strokes from the belfry,—
Softly they float on the gale ;
And into the harbor of dreamland
Our ships would lazily sail.

But no ! On, on with the Fairies !
'Tis a time to be blithe and gay :
So we'll up and dance till Aurora
Flings open the gates of day.

Come Robin!

WILT thou return ere long, my feathered friend,
And where the wonted elm makes shady bower
Fit out thy downy cradle as of yore;
And from thy verdant spray by zephyr tossed,
Pour out thy madrigals with liquid throat,
To bid the leaden time of care be gone,
And call me slugabed at dawn of day
With teasings of thy matin serenade?
I pine for thy return,—speed thou the time;
And loyal be unto thy friends of eld!

Alackaday! My^{*}wrath is kindled new,
When I recall the direful tragedy
That wrecked thy cozy home, abortive made
Thy toilful striving all; and changed,—ah me!
Thy gladsome carols into requiems.
Yet if thou canst forget the wicked past;
And at the instance of the Spring new born,
To former haunts in winged haste return
To dight thy nest in yonder crotch secure
As in the yester time, I swear to thee
No ruffian jay or sparrow e'er again
Shall make thy habitation desolate.

The Violet's Invitation

I

“I GROW unbidden
A violet I.
In cranny hidden,
I woo the sky.

“Wouldst thou a wild flower?
Lo! Here I be!
A sunshine dower
I'll be to thee.

“Meet haunt for fairy
This shady nook;
Where birds make merry,
And purls the brook.

“Come lilt in gladness
Thy ballad gay;
A truce to sadness
On such a day.”

II

"My runes come slowly,
Wouldst have me try?
My viol is lowly,
Dear plant," said I.

"My strains not soaring:
My secret art
Is peace outpouring,
Where bleeds some heart.

"Here reigneth laughter:
Ask not this thing!
Anon hereafter,
Dear plant, I'll sing."

Evening

'TIS eve,—'tis eve,—

The day's reprieve.

Night's glittering tears upon the plain

Bewail the crimson day-god slain ;

And silence sacro-sanct doth hold

In villeinage a dreaming wold.

Above yon russet, rock-ribbed height,

Chaste Dian lingers fair of sight.

In slumber doth she seem to rest

Her head on yonder hillock's crest ;

And Titan shades armed cap-a-pie,

Like swarming clans the day defy.

The North King

I SAT me near the hearth's faint flickering flame;
A thousand fairy fancies went and came,
While cold and cruel raged the wintry gale
Along the barren hill and frozen vale.
I nodded, drowsed, and in unfettered sleep,
I wandered, fancy free, the trackless deep.

Far upward in the Arctic's icy waste,
Methought I saw on crystal fabric placed,
Enthroned the North King, clad in regal state,
Whose slightest nod a menial host await.
'Twas where the foot of man had never strayed;
His eye had ne'er the glorious scene surveyed.
'Twas where no venturous bark e'er skimmed the
brine;
Where peaks ice-crested in the sunlight shine.
'Twas where the monarch holds perpetual sway;
Where frozen deeps his every wish obey.

See! myriad snowflakes in a whirl descend,
And copse and brake in trembling agony bend;
The meadows now in glittering shrouds are wrapped,
And icy fetters on the streams are clapped:

'Tis now I know the tyrant's spell is cast
On land and sea,—the Ruler of the blast.
Then whistling, howling, shrieking on his way,
I see him hurtling on through all the day.
The playful fountain gushing erst with life,
Where roses glowed and violets were rife,
Stands stark in death, a horror in its gaze,
Its music frozen, hushed its roundelay.

A palace towering toward the frigid skies
Stands glittering with a thousand varied dyes.
No onset of the North Wind's raging powers
Can shake its green-hued battlements and towers.
A crystal gate gives entrance to the hold,
When havoc-sated, king and minion bold,
Quit southern climes, and in the castle great
Hold wassail high and rule their proud estate.
With rarest frostwork all the portals beam,
And myriad glowing crystals glint and gleam.
The stately monarch treads a man of might,
With jeweled sceptre, crown, and vesture white.
E'en as King Aeolus did in bondage keep
Unruly winds that strove their bounds to leap,
So, too, in crystal caverns pent secure,
The North King holds his blustering vassals sure.

At times on pleasure bent the king goes forth
To hunt the monsters of the frigid North.
Then winged sea-fowl and the sporting seal
And polar bears his fateful presence feel.
Oft, too, some hapless ship that plows the main
Is hurled in fragments o'er the watery plain.
The hunt tears on beneath the northern lights
That flame aloft and crimson all the heights.
In sledge of gold the king pursues the chase,
And like a meteor flashes into space.

Whe-ew! What's this? My wandering wits return,
The fires no longer on the hearthstone burn.
My limbs are numb, I'm shivering with the cold.
Confound old Morpheus and the North King bold!

Old Thoughts in Dresses New



Judge Not

I WOULD not have thee judge my heart
By what the outward eye can see;
To judge my heart is Heaven's part,
And Heaven will kindest deal with me.

The heart is our own citadel,
Which God alone can penetrate.
No mind can tell or know so well
Our thoughts and whence they emanate.

To harsher thoughts say thou adieu.
Are milder judgments not the best?
The kindest view comes soonest true,
When deeds are put to certain test.

To judge thy neighbor be thou slow;
And peaceful shall thy slumber be.
On friend or foe, do thou bestow
Thy sweet and gentle charity.

The Braver Knight

If thou couldst take thy needy brother's place
And be the pleader at another's door,
Wouldst feel aggrieved if so he turned his face
Nor gave thee aught from out his ample store?

Couldst thou but change thy lot for just a while,
And have as he, thy brother's heart of woe,
Wouldst lightly prize the cheery word or smile
Thou gavest not, but now thou cravest so?

There's many a sorrow thou shalt never know;
The greater burden seeks the stouter soul.
Thy brother's shield can bear a sturdier blow;
Else had there been for him a lighter dole.

True Love

WOULDST know the most delightful song,—
The sweetest man can sing?
The tongueless anthem deep and strong,
That finds the wonted phrase too long,
The flaming heart's outpouring sigh,
'Tis this that penetrates the sky
And captivates the King.

Where love divine kindleth a heart,
Convention it defies.
Then does it scorn set laws of art:
Like eagle skyward does it dart.
The best of what it has it gives;
Yet being poor it richer lives;
And lives whereof it dies.

In Rambles Here and There



My Little Friend

THERE is a little miss I meet,—
I pass her daily on the street;
She greets me with a smile so sweet
That I am captivated.

A fairy she, scarce seven years old;
About her head play locks of gold;
No rose is fairer to behold
Than she, when all is stated.

She is like one of those,—ah me!
That climbed the Savior's gentle knee;
And felt His hand so lovingly
Upon their silken tresses.

And when she asks me, "How are you?"
Just as all grown up persons do,
I make a serious answer to
Her ladylike addresses.

God bless my cheery little friend!
Her artless ways I would not mend;
I'd have her thus unto the end,
 Could I but have my pleasure.

Methinks full surely God has given .
This sunny sprite of years scarce seven,
To closer link my heart to heaven,
 And there to place my treasure.

The Fallen Oak

UPON the river's shingly beach there lies
Part 'mersed and part exposed, what erstwhile was
Some forest pride,—an ancient bole of oak.
Whence came it there, no human tongue could tell.
No doubt when I am gone and laid to rest,
Full many a stranger wandering there will pause,
And speculate upon its age, and draw
Reflection from its melancholy plight.

Black storms have raged and uttered fierce and loud
Their execrations o'er that monarch dead.
Descending rains have drenched, and monster waves
Have whelmed him o'er and o'er; and water birds
In rapid flights have gloated o'er his head;
He heeds them not; but lieth there outstretched,
Like some Leviathan in shackles bound,—
All powerless and yet defiant still
Unto the last.

The vermeil blush at eve,
The moon's caress or frolic of the stars,
A dawn imparadised at early morn,
Or winter's downy largess falling down
Are one to him,—he marks their presence not.

Time was when 'mong his brothers of the wood,
That he could glory in his rugged strength;
Could laugh to scorn the onset of the gale;
And look the blue of heaven in the face;
And hearken to the chansons of the birds;
And shelter them upon his gnarled limbs;
And catch the forest's murmured symphony
Of swaying boughs; and hear the vagrant owl
Make ghostly din; and sustenance afford
Unto the squirrel, his merry little friend.
What destiny unkind has laid him low?

Wouldst thou to heaven soar on wing of fame?
Wouldst have thy name and deeds emblazed fore'er
On tablet of a deathless age, that men
Of dawning generations thee may hail
As Corypheus of thy fellows all?
Wouldst have men chant in honeyed word of praise
Thy fame as poet, orator, savant?
Vain,—vain will all such glory be to thee
When thou thyself art mouldering in the dust.
The tooth of time will leave thee as yon oak,—
A thing of wretched helplessness to point
A moral to each straggler passing by.

So part we, fallen monarch of the wood !
Let none presume with taunt disdainful then
To blast thy memory, or deem accursed
Thy lot. High heaven forfend ! Hast nobly wrought ;
Hath shed o'er man and beast thy canopy
Of cooling shade ; hast bared thy rugged breast
To blighting thunderbolts, that else to earth
Had crashed thy lesser kindred of the grove ;
Hast braved thy century of chilling blasts ;
Hast yielded of thy fruitage lavishly ;
And fired youth to deed of high emprise
In emulation of thy sturdiness.
Thou saidst thy *Nunc Dimittis* worthily.
To thee.....all hail !

Glimpses

WHEN brightly shines the sun by day
And balmy zephyrs blow;
I'll ramble,—ramble far away,—
I reckon not where I go.

To some sequestered nook I'll stray,
And find a bower there,
Where redbreast robin's roundelay
Enthralls the ambient air.

A dainty patch of sun-kissed sky
Will greet me through the trees:
Some year-scarred oak may charm my eye
To martial rhapsodies.

Should chance impel me to yon stream,
How softly I shall tread;
And watch the sportive fishes gleam
Above their mossy bed;

Where virgin lilies white as snow
Coquet the vagrant breeze;
And clumps of sweet wild flowers grow
To tempt bold robber-bees.

And pasture lands full oft I'll pass
Where cattle pause to drink;
Or browse on plot of tender grass
Beside the river's brink.

I'll steal upon the water rat;
And silent in the shade,
I'll view him near the habitat
His nightly toil has made.

And gorgeous sunsets I may see
To thrill me with delight;
Until night's sombre tapestry
Shuts out their glories bright.

I've seen Apocalyptic fires
Of colors who should say;
As if upon their blazing pyres
The Sun had passed away.

But ah! whene'er such sights I see,—
Such glimpses as I stray,
I ken that Thou, my Deity,
Art not so far away.

Sursum Corda

Sonnet

"The wisdom of a discreet man is to understand his way."

—Prov. XIV-8.

ASK me not for dalliance path of ease,
Where sunlit stretches ever thrill the eye;
While song birds throated red entreat the sky;
And rosebursts flame their tinted ecstasies.
Nay, soul of mine! Life's cunning witcheries
Leave we to fools who are content to buy
Brief hour of bliss for one eternal sigh—
Whose pleasure knells their dead souls' obsequies.
I would discern of bitterness the sweet;
Kiss tenderly my rood of little pains;
Make nothingness to coin me golden gains;
Learn wisdom's folly at my Master's feet;
And hear from Him: "Right nobly hast thou
wrought;
Thy loaned bond hath premium richly brought."

Wouldst Still Be True?

THOU dost avow thy friendship leal and true.

So be it then. Yet if the veil should rise,
As aye it will, and to thine eager eyes
My bloody Cross in shame should stand to view,
Wouldst still be true?

Wilt cleave to Me till death, dost thou maintain?

So be it then. Yet if the rod should bend
To smite and scourge thee till thy spirit send
Aloft its wail of piteous pleading pain,
Wouldst still be true?

If I should levy impost on thy heart,

And quench from galaxy of love each one
Of those fair stars thou fondly dotest on,
Couldst see a Father's hand in all thy smart?
Wouldst still be true?

And if I stripped thee bare, as frost the tree,
Till there, amid the dead leaves scattered round,
Only the naked trunk should cumber ground,—
How now? Wouldst falter not? Still cling to Me?
Wouldst still be true?

The Face of God

THERE are no pangs to souls forlorn
Where riven hearts are aching,
Nor tears of childhood's sunny morn
Which are not of thy making,
O Sorrow, that from pole to pole,
Dost yield us all thy bitter dole!

The rose we pluck in beauty's blow
Gives sadness in the taking;
There's sorrow in the sunset's glow
Our wistful eyes forsaking.
How strange the mixture in our joy,
The gaining which but brings alloy.

Our loves are purest, so we deem,
Where stricken self lies sighing:
Just as the rainbow's loveliest beam
Yet lovelier seems in dying;
And from the cradle to the grave,
The heart's best gifts 'twas sorrow gave.

There is one object over all,
 'Tis heaven when we view it;
There's but one thing which cannot pall,
 But losing which we rue it,—
The Face of God,—oh yes, 'tis this
Shall flood with tide of perfect bliss.

To the Infant Jesus

DEAR Infant Jesus, Mary's Child,
Down steep of love to earth beguiled,
While gentle sleep
Thine eyelids keep,
To where Thou slumb'rest on Thy Mother's breast
I'll noiseless creep,
One happy moment to abide Thy guest.

Oh! stealthily I'll creep and soft.
What if Thou raise Thine eyes aloft
To find near Thee
Unworthy me?
And yet Thou durst not banish me, I trow;
For tenderly
Thy Mother's smile must plead for me, I know.

But woe is me,—Thou art awake!
I bend the knee and reverence make.
The shepherds there
Are bowed in prayer,
The while Thou stretchest forth Thy tiny arms
With smile so fair,
That all my fears give way before Thy charms.

Then let me ask of Thee one thing,—
One thing,—dear little Infant King:
 To love Thee so
 Through weal or woe,
That Thou shalt come, not as a Judge severe—
 My Jesus, no!
But smilingly, as in sweet childhood's year.

What Wouldst Thou Have?

WHAT shall I proffer Thee, my gracious King?
What firstling to Thine altar shall I bring?
The world is Thine with all it can unfold
Of daedal splendor, gem, and precious gold.

Acclaim they not Thy handicraft divine
This tenement of clay and soul of mine?
And is there aught for me to give this day
Which was not wholly Thine before, I pray?

As silvery dewfall cometh answer sweet:
"Dear one, give Me thy heart, thy love: 'tis meet.
Be sure of this: there is not other key
To open wide the door that leads to Me."

God pleads with thee where man would domineer.
He pleads with all; few souls there are that hear.
Yet marvel not; the world enamored is
Too much of baubles, childish vanities;

Till shock of death ope wide its palsied ear
Too late the wronged Suitor's curse to hear.
Wherefore He sends His timely rood of pain,—
Divinest strategem our hearts to gain.

One Groom there is to Whom our troth is due;
A realm of exile for the soul untrue;
There's one,—but one eternity and there
What love extreme! what love's extreme despair!

He Maketh all Things as They Are

I SAW two roses sweet and fair,
In a garden plot they grew.
They were blushing there
In the summer air,
And wet with the gleaming dew.

Then which say ye, my choice should be?
I stood there puzzled sore.
Ah goodness me!
'Twas a sight to see,
How they trembled and blushed the more.

I turned me then to a daisy near;
And I spake in accents low :
"I prithee dear
This mystery clear,—
Why blush the roses so?"

The artless creature made reply;
These words she spake to me :
"The reason why
They blush and sigh,—
Each rose has it's thorn," said she.

"I envy not the rose," quoth she.

"God made all as they are ;

Assuredly

'Tis best to be

One's self,—'tis best by far.

"Though Sister Rose, as all may see,

Stand fairest of her kind,

Yet would I be,

Were choosing free,

As Providence designed."

Here in the Chapel's Dusky Aisle Apart

Sonnet

WOULDST thou unbear the counsel of thy breast
To kindred soul that will a balm impart?

Dost need some solace for thy weary heart?

Go sooner thou to Him: 'tis far the best;

Within His gift is lasting peace and rest.

Here in the chapel's dusky aisle apart,

Kneel thou as child in trust, whoe'er thou art;

And thou shalt know thyself a welcome guest.

Full many a weary pilgrim here hath felt—

Here where the timid sheen of yonder light

Steals through the dark as glowworm in the
night—

Renewal of his spirit as he knelt

In prayerful converse at the feet of Him,

Who bringeth joy to man and Seraphim.

Mariana

To Mary

MARY, if thou wouldst let me sing
My love for thee all hungering,
I'd pilfer honey like the bee
From all sweet things for song to thee.
I'd borrow from the philomel;
The violin should serve me well;
And I should pillage earth and sky
Till all sweet things with each should vie
To laud thee, Mother mild!

Mary, if I could paint thy face,
The Masters all should yield me place;
And all composite charms should meet
In thy fair visage exquisite.
I'd lend thee robe of snowy white;
I'd gird thy brow with stars of night;
And only He should lovelier be
Thine arms caress so tenderly,—
Thine own dear little Child.

Mary, if I could have my way
When splendor robes each dying day,
The sun's red cohorts, vanished he,
Should circle round thy Child and thee;

And gazing outward to the west,
All eyes should catch the vision blest;
And mightily one chant would rise
To hail thee Queen of Earth and Skies,—
Thou peerless, undefiled!

The Assumption

SO she was dead.

Did they bewail her going that stood nigh
And heard those virgin lips make parting sigh,
When death bowed low her queenly head,
And left that comely house of clay untenanted?

A thousand voices answer, "No!"

Here there was all of triumph, naught of woe.
Unworthy was earth's garden longer to possess
Flower such of Godlike loveliness.

Who so had fashioned it with matchless art,

To His own bower

Bore He that charming flower

To wear it ever next His burning Heart.

So beautifully there she lay,

As twilight after crimson death of day ;

Or as some placid woodland brook

That cradled sleeps in cozy nook,

Where not so much the timid rustle of a breeze

Perturbs the pendent drowsing trees.

Joseph her spouse was dead,

Who might have kept dear vigil at her dying bed ;

And He was gone—

The Blessed Son she had so doted on—

Not there to whisper in sweet accents soft and low
Endearing name of "Mother," and bestow
Caress of love upon the silent dead.

Methinks I see that happy, radiant throng,
As skyward, on their flashing pinions strong,
In meteoric flight,
Through many an aureate highway of celestial light,
They bear the Virgin garbed in gladness,
Disrobed of time's black garniture of sadness
Up to the peerless City of Eternal Charms,
Where kiss and tender open arms
Of Him Who is the Spouse, of kings the King—
The Life, the Hope, and everything—
Shall make her soul to sing
For aye and aye
But one sweet burning roundelay;
And peace shall sit enthroned as queen at last
Within that spotless heart whereof the past
Had been an endless pang of hungering.

The night is gone.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Ring in the dawn!
Tears are forever dried:
Fled have raging demons their chagrin to hide.
O Mary gaze upon thy Son!
Behold what glory He has won!

Where erstwhile five unsightly gaping wounds had
been—

The dastard havoc of a world of sin—

Behold the trancing splendors of another sheen

Whose undimmed lustre shall forever stay

To be the radiance of the new and deathless day

That night shall have no power more to take away.

O pride and joy of all our race! Thy work is done.

The pain, the tear,

The doubt, the fear—

Mere episodes are they of battles fought and won—

Yielding an added zest to present joys begun.

With tender, gracious smile,

The King doth beckon her the while

To seat of bliss.

O God! Was ever moment like to this?

Upon her brow He sets a crown,

Our Lady,—ah, so modest gazing down.

And when she raises up that head in beauty all serene,

Eternal fiat hath proclaimed her Universal Queen.

Then loud hosannas shake high heaven's dome

Of Cherubim and Seraphim—

A splendid soul-enthraling hymn.

All of those millions singing

Set countless echoes ringing,

To bid our Blessed Mother welcome home.

Sing! Ye denizens of heaven, sing!
Alleluia to the King!
Accord ye royal greeting to His daughter fair!
Give forth, glad harps, your dulcet harmonies
So wont to please!
From every throbbing string
Alleluia to the King!
His praises loud declare!
Ye jasper walls and pearly gates yield echo sweet!
That rousing, cheering ave song repeat—
Alleluia to the King!
Let all the welkin ring!
Ye saints and angels give her honored place—
Akin to us, yet bearing of our blight no trace!
Sing! Sing! Sing!
'Tis more than trivial thing
Through all life's pain, its sorrows, and its care
A queen to bring
That she may share
Rejoicing with her king—
A mother to the son
Divinity alone could paragon.

O touch, some winged servitor of heaven, my tongue
With coal of burning fire!
My viol attune to strain yet higher;
For wist ye song by Poesy e'er sung

When in her wildest flight
She mounted up to eagle's height,
And with undaunted eye
Outbraved the very day-god of the sky?
Wist ye of song or hymn
That should essay to limn
The joy to ear and eyes,
The rhapsodies,
The glad surprise
Of the new found home—God's Paradise?

The Virgin's soul with pleasure fills;
Her heart is aye one burst of rapture-thrills
To strain of melody so sweet,
None might to mortal ears such harmonies repeat;
'Twould strike earth's symphonies forever dumb,
If such concerted notes should hither come.

Wise, wise, oh wondrous wise are ye
That keep your steadfast gaze upon eternity!
Whenas that others,
Weakly sisters, brothers,
Toil to seek
The dizzy height of honor's mountain peak,
Ye carry out in peace of soul your Master's will
'Mid trials mayhap and grinding poverty until
Ye hear at length that Master's voice, "Well done!"
Your thread of life its course has run.

O Spirit wise!
Give us to seek true enterprise
In things that shall not pass away,
But turn to riches for eternity.

Mother Mine

DO thou not forget me
Sweetest Mother mine,
Though a God be cradled
In those arms of thine.

We, too, are thy children ;
Thy dear little Son
Made of thee our Mother,—
From His Cross 'twas done.

Fair as ever dewdrop
On some flower's crest,
Is the Dear Who nestles
On thy Mother's breast.

Yet though child like Jesus
Ne'er drew breath of morn,
Will thy heart not shelter
Me, too,—poor forlorn?

Soft and low thy crooning
Stills His baby cry:
May thy love caressing,
Our sad hearts ally.

When my lips have spoken
Their last faint Amen,
Be thou blessed monstrance
Holding Jesus then.

What's in a Name?



What War Can Do

WHAT can war do?

Enkindle giant fires of hate and wrath,
Leave charred and smoking ruin in its path;
Gold-dabbled fields to bloody shambles turn,
Where highest glory is to hack and burn;
And when the battle smoke has cleared away,
The pink of manhood is the vulture's prey :—
This war can do.

What can war do?

Undo what toiling ages left in fee,—
Give bankrupt heirloom to posterity;
Snatch husband from a cherished wife's embrace,
And leave at every hearth some vacant place.
Do fiendish deeds that only spawn of hell
Could aptly joy thereat and say: 'tis well :—
This war can do.

What can war do?

Lay on the lash until amid the dust
Our loud *peccavis* purge the deed unjust;

Scourge us until we prize the worth of peace,
And plead to Him we've slighted for release;
Down topple every idol of our pride,
Turn heedless millions to the Crucified :—
This war can do.

A Light through the Darkness

O H! the city's rumble and roar,—
Of factory, office, and store!
 'Tis buy and sell,
 'Tis shout and yell,
 With the dong of bell,
 And crowds pellmell;
Until you wish you were heaven knows where,—
Out in the fields with God's fresh air.

And the poverty, misery, crime,
With the filth, the stench, and the grime!
 Go to poverty's lair,
 And you'll find them there,
 With the larder bare,
 And the grim despair!
Say ye, that this is a Christian land?
'Tis a mystery this to understand.

Aye, the grasp, the greed, and the sin;
With the scheme more wealth to win!
 What a bustle and fight
 From dawn till night;

While Mammon's might
Makes all things right!
So screw and grind to the meanest cent,
While widows' tears be your merriment!

Thank God for the gleam of—a Light
That cheers through the dark of the night!
Sometimes kneel there
In trustful prayer;
And wan despair
Will turn to air;
For He Who can will bring relief,
Who drained to dregs life's cup of grief.

Up, Sluggard, and Away!

WILT thou abide within on such a day
And leave base indolence to cozen thee
Of such a treat of sights Elysian?
For shame! For shame! Go! get thee clad in haste,
While yet in roseate childhood is the day;
And many a stretch of blue doth intervene
Apollo and his noontide goal betwixt.
Shake off thy torpor then; and mark it well,
How every living thing,—the coyest e'en
Of nature's children, maketh holiday.

Let us a rambling go, where zephyrs light
Do wanton with the wild flowers on the lea;
Where doth the quail's shrill whistle wafted come
O'er harvests rich and fair of golden grain;
Where honey flies their secrets soft and low
Do breathe, each in his clovered bower hid;
Or better come with me to Pictured Rocks;
And clamber up its tortuous ascent;
And when that thou hast planted firm thy foot
Upon the frowning ledge that crowns its brow;
And like the eagle from his eyrie thou
Dost gaze full many a fearful fathom down;
Then shall a very paradise unfold

Its panoramic splendors to thine eye ;
And there in wonder whist, shalt thou behold
Such scenes as only Araby the blest,
Or Tempe's vale might hope to emulate.

For many a mile to north and south of thee,
There stretches on a never ending chain
Of wooded heights, whereon 'twould seem indeed
That silver clouds of iv'rine loveliness
Did sleep and dream the listless hours away.
To east and north of thee in smiling dell,
Sweet Prairie sends her smoke wreaths curling high ;
Whilst down below with many a graceful curve,
His bosom strown with isles of living green,
The lordly Mississippi slows along.
And if thy roving eye but follow him,
A vista exquisite shall thrill thy soul,
Where fair Wisconsin greets her princely groom.

Come then, my friend, and be thou unconstrained
By fancied obstacles to bide at home ;
For swift our shallop is to ply the wave ;
And ere thou knowest it, yon nether strand
That skirts the fairy haunt of Pictured Rocks,
Shall give thee smiling hospitality.

How Bill Forgave

HE stood in silence on the beach and gazed
Out westward where the setting sun still blazed.
'Twas Bill the Trapper, man of mystery;
Poor Bill for sure did have a history;
But whence he came, or what he used to be,
He always guarded this right carefully.
A picture made he in that sunset glare,—
The breezes dallying with his snowy hair.
Just overhead a hawk was poised in air:
The telltale waters told its presence there.
Bill's gun was by his side, his skiff close by;
His home, a solitary hut, stood nigh;
And from its burnished window panes there came
A sunset's legacy of molten flame.

He turned and entered through the open door;
And flung his steel traps clanging on the floor.
He laid his rifle on a table there;
And soon began to polish it with care.
He rubbed and polished till the rifle gleamed.
The more he polished, so the more he seemed
To find relief in furbishing that piece,
So long, as though the task would never cease.

He paused, as if to battle with a thought:
His breath came quick, his face grew stern and taut.
A murderous glare of hate was in his look;
And passion stirred his frame until it shook.

His enemy had crossed his path that day;
'Twas on the open waters of the bay;
But fate was kind,—unrecognized was he,
His beard concealing his identity.
A brother was the foe,—his brother's self,
Who would have murdered him for greed of pelf;
Who left him feel for six long years too well,
The horrors of an insane prison cell.
Good fortune favored him, and he was free:
He had escaped and found sweet liberty.
His hated brother and his friends, he knew,
Had pitched their tents a mile above the slough.
His long desired chance had come at last,
And Bill would have revenge for all the past.

His anger grew;—some hasty strides he took;—
The while his little habitation shook;
When lo! a picture tumbled from the wall,
His mother's picture,—dearest thing of all.
The two half portions lay together there,—
An angel face incomparably fair.

How sweetly did she seem to smile at Bill ;
The throbbing heart within him stood stock still.
He kissed the broken fragments o'er and o'er,
And lay there sobbing,—groaning on the floor.

Then childhood memories crowded in amain.
He would have shut them out, but strove in vain.
His good for nothing life before him rose ;
And was a murder then to be its close ?
At length he sat him down and bowed his head.
His soul was deeply humbled and he said :
“Why should these eyes of mine forever see
One thing alone,—my brother's treachery ?
Within this hut contented might I live,
Could I but make this stubborn heart forgive.
I've loved as lover seldom loved before :
My foes I've hated to the very core.
No deed of mine by halves was ever done ;
And by the God that ruleth yonder sun,
As I have hated, so forgive shall I :
My hate shall cease ere yonder sun shall die.”

From out his doorway then he peered again ;
And while the sun sank low he said, “Amen !”
And just as if to seal his grand desire,
That kindling west became a sea of fire :
And crimson streamers mounting to the skies,
Gave Bill an outward glimpse of Paradise.

Quid Pro Quo

ONE day as I sat in the gloaming
And fancy was let go free,
As a bee returning from its roaming,
She culled these thoughts for me.

Thought I of human ambition,—
Daydreams that men entertain:
How few can boast of fruition!
They die in the planner's brain.

Granted is guerdon never
In heaven or here below—
Only to honest endeavor
Falleth a *quid pro quo*.

Be this on thy soul engraven,
Dreamer of dreams inane,
No barque for the dreamer's haven
Save barque on a painted main.

The ant,—how small a creature;
Yet never a sluggard he.
Canst find a wiser teacher
In the school of industry?

A laurel wreath to the doer;
But crown of shame for the drone.
Success bides never a wooer
Save patient toil alone.

Kusa-Hibari

This curious bird (the Japanese Grass Lark) has been minutely described in a republished article of the late Lafcadio Hearn, which appeared in *The Phoenix*, 1914.

IN sunny land of far Japan,
A wondrous bird is known to dwell:
So slight is he, that eye of man
His whereabouts can scarcely tell.
But ah! when Day hath barred his door,
And cypress-garbed Night draws near,
Did silvern shuttle e'er outpour
Of bird such song to mortal ear?
The night is hushed,
Kusa-Hibari,
And slumber's fain
To list and tarry.

Not garish splendor of the day
May hope to win thy dulcet song;
But twinkling star and moonlight's play—
To such as these dost thou belong.
Wee eremite! I prithee tell
Hast filched thy music from the skies,

Where heaven's port ope'd wide a spell
For soul to enter Paradise?
Howbeit sing,
Kusa-Hibari,
When peeps the dawn,
Night may not tarry.

I feel me jealous of thy lay,
And envy me thy soul of song:
Thou warblest love I ne'er can say,
Though my poor heart beat full as strong.
Yet He Who in such wondrous wise
Allied thy soul to minstrelsy,
Shall know to mate my yearning cries
To sweeter spirit melody.
Ah then in sooth,
Kusa-Hibari,
'Mid song like thine
I'll ever tarry.

By Bitter Waters

Unavailing Tears

SHE was not kind to him,
No, was not kind to him.

Day in, day out, they'd been so much together
In sunny hours, in gloom of stormy weather,
She knew not her own heart, and so
She gave no sign when he did go.

He came not home again,
Alas, not home again.

They brought her news how in the battle fray
He fought like hero till his dying day.
She had not known her heart, and oh!
What unavailing tears will flow!

Why must we learn, too late,
Our hearts have loved? Too late?
And just because two souls in varied weather
In love's society are much together,
Shall death alone make either know
Too late they loved each other so?

But Once

BUT once! Wait not till life is done!
With biting smart
Shall bleed thy heart,
If thou first tell
From His averted downcast look,
Thy doom in yonder sealed book.
In sooth thy hell
Of frenzied anguish hath begun.

But once! Then dawns eternity.
Thy God draws near!
Art prey to fear?
Plead thou His grace;
No contrite soul comes here too late.
Make haste,—bow low and supplicate;
There's yet a place
Where Mercy's Heart will shelter thee.

But once! Oh then supernal prize!
Death none may stay
Nor bribe away.
Wouldst seek to hide

The Dead-Sea apples thou hast sown?
These shall confront thee as thine own;
And must abide
A verdict ever just and wise.

But once, and since 'tis even so,
Why seek to flee
What needs must be?
Make death thy friend!
If thou placate him all thy days
By righteous living in thy ways,
Death shall portend
What fate thou yearnest here to know.

Home

BEHOLD a beggar come to thee!
In vain the pittance coin I've sought
From busy throng that heeded not;
But eyed askance my unromance;
Lest closer ken of such mischance
But shock life's calm serenity.

Wilt Thou receive e'en such as I?
O God! The veriest shred to me
Of tenderness shall welcome be.
Aweary I the kick, the cuff,
The spurning door, the cold rebuff,
The night wind's weird and wailing sigh.

A smile of pity dims His eye;
Outstretched His hand with loving art
That deigns me housage in His heart.
"Come!" Heard I ne'er so sweet a call;
Mine could I deem a happy fall,
To shelter find thus wondrously.

Be Thou Trustful

THOU hast said thou art weary
Of the toils that crush thy heart;
Thou art old and days are dreary;
Thou wouldst fain this life depart.

Shall there be no brighter morrow
Come to smile upon thy grief?
Comes there no surcease of sorrow
For thy harassed soul's relief?

Friend of mine, there is a power
Which can bid thy pain to cease:
Kiss thy blessed cross, 'twill dower
Thy sore heart with heaven's peace.

Aye, not gem nor golden treasure
Providence would ask of thee;
See thou yield to God's good pleasure;
Bow thy head to His decree.

Servest thou some master cruel?
One who knoweth not thy clay?
Love's and wisdom's guidance dual,—
These direct thee on thy way.

Then up and on, nor falter ever!
Be His ordinance thy will.
Hence caitiff fear! Begone forever!
Hope and trust and struggle still.

As the honey fly extracteth
Dainty stores from each fair flower,
Be whate'er thy God exacteth
Thy dear quest each bleeding hour!

Multum in Parvo



The Truest Alms

NOT from the silken purse, but from the heart,
The truest alms proceed;
The coin that succors half the beggar's smart
Leaves other half to bleed.
Some stray "God bless you," thou didst here repeat
May bring thee highest pay,
When thou shalt stand beside the Judgment Seat,
Upon the Judgment Day.

Death

THE teeming, drooping, golden ear
Invites the gleaner's knife;
And for the harvest of the year,
Ope's wide the bin of life.

Eternal Love

OUT of a boundless deep come I to be,
And back must plunge me in this yawning sea.
Such pearl of price yon deep shall yield to me,
As shall make glad my heart eternally.

The Titanic

GAZ laughter rang out on the night air
From the deck of that mighty ship,
As over the water she glided,
In the flush of her maiden trip.

But out of the sable shadows
A monster iceberg steals.
Crash! and the pride of the ocean,—
A helpless wreck she reels.

Aye, a lifetime passed in those moments,
Which brought true men to the fore,
Who went to their deaths unrepining,—
Heroes through to the core.

Others shall fade from remembrance
Who trod the ways of renown;
But these shall the ages emblazen,
And carry them centuries down.

At home many hearts beat gladly ;
Loved ones would soon be near ;
And the bliss of a speedy reunion
Would banish the starting tear.

But deep in those icy waters
That cargo of heroes sank down ;
And the gurgling tide of the ocean
Devoured them every one.

Bleak, bleak are the hearths of thousands,
Bewailing their dead this day ;
Only the solace of heaven
Can lessen their dread dismay.

O Pilot of destiny lead us
Through treacherous ways that be ;
Till safe o'er life's wildering waters
We ride into harbor with Thee !

Ruth and Harold

Ruth and Harold

PROLOGUE

PUT forth, my little word, Godspeed to thee!
O'er wold and fallow, over land and sea,
With nimble wing as does the carrier fly,
Winnowing the silken highways of the sky.
Thou pipest olden ballad unto men,—
A strain neglected they ought hear again.
Belike such hearing of a thing neglect
Restore it whilom place of high respect.

WEDDING BELLS

HOW fair is the day
And bright the sky;
And sweet is the way
Yon bells would try
To tell of the nuptials soon to be
Glad as of Cana in Galilee.

Hist! Hist! From his bough
 Lilts robin gay.
'Tis a wager now
 Jack Robin's lay
Tattles how sweethearts two will be
Knit soon into blessed unity.

Sing! Sing all earth!
 Has come love's Spring.
Shall the soul of mirth
 Have not her fling?
And the organ's loud diapason swells
To the festal note of the pealing bells.

And the altar's a dream
 In charm it discloses,
Where taper-gems gleam
 'Mid lilies and roses:
Lilies for purity, roses for love,
Stray chords from an angel harp above.

ATTENDING ANGELS AND MARRIAGE BLESSING

Voice of Attending Angels

NOW with buckler of faith they have hemmed them
round :

In the path of this couple shall grace abound,
To build them strong, to build them true ;
And peace shall fall on their lives as dew.

The Words of the Blessing

The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God
of Jacob be with you forever !

Voice of Attending Angels

They fear no frown of a scorning crowd ;
And the praise of their lives speaks trumpet loud :
His blessings will shine on their days as the sun,
Till the silver threads of their lives be spun.

The Words of the Blessing

May he fulfill his blessing in you, that you may see
your children's children to the third and fourth
generation. Amen.

EBB AND FLOW

THE time tides roll. A year has quickly fled.
Pray deem it no intrusion should we part
The curtains of domestic privacy
To ascertain how fares it with the twain,
Erstwhile the cynosure of envious eyes.

Has seen home at its best? Where peace might see
Her own sweet mirrored self, and smitten be
Of her own loveliness? Such homes there be;
And such a home was theirs: begun in faith,
In wealth of trust surpassing rich, and sealed
By love of more than tinsel beauty's sham,
So prone to pale the worthier gifts beneath.

Hast seen home at its best? Harsh word found there
No lodgment on the lip; where husband scorned
To hector wife; where purity dared not
Besmirch her charming self by word or deed
That eyne of Heaven might not countenance.
In such a home did Ruth and Harold dwell.

Yet even their short span of wedded life
Ran not so calm and smoothly on, but that
From time to time some bludgeonings of trial

Or shift of cruel circumstance gave them
Morsel of Christ's sorrow for their food ;
Whereat they proved their steadfastness to Him
And said, "Thy will be done! Thy will be done!"

Small wonder then that their example shone
A goodly force to neighbors old and young :
Calling to mind how worth their while it was
To draw like draughts of sacramental grace
From channels they had erstwhile oft misprized.

If so be thou hast ever taen thy stance
In valley where commanding heights arose
In lordly grandeur left and right of thee,
Just when his westering beam the dying sun
'Gan focus on some solitary cliff
To Tabor it with splendors manifold,
What then? Did not the dying day-god seem
To fix it heir beloved of all he had
Of opal gems and jewels luminous?
Aye! Till it stood transfigured, Mount of God ;
And eye of thee was sore abashed ; nor would,
Nor durst not longer rashly brazen it.

And so may grace of God transfigure e'en
The meanest, shabbiest, lowliest thing of earth.

CANTICLE OF JOY

Harold

THOU hast been over good to me;
This helpmate Thou hast given
Brims full my life with happy days
That liken earth to heaven.
All mortals owe their debt to Thee,
Yet mine exceeds all measure:
And this, my queenly bride, hold I
My chiefest earthly treasure.

Men dote on outward charms they see
In some enchanting creature;
My Ruth's endearing ways I prize
Far more than form or feature.
If press of business cause me fret
And I am prone to sadness,
Her smile turns bitter into sweet,
Turns sorrow into gladness.

And if from out of tender skies
Should come this added blessing
Of baby face and arms that plead
To other arms caressing,

The holiest aim that wife can have
Will be her fondest craving
To rear her little one for Thee,
And help Thee in its saving.

And since Thou art so good to me,
Spare her whom Thou hast given;
Then happier still my soul shall be,
Since I'll be closer heaven.
And should I live to tottering age
Through storm and sunshine weather,
May she stay on, my golden heart,
While we grow gray together.

OUT OF A FULL HEART

Ruth

I FAIN would sing a hymn to Thee,
O God of peerless majesty!

Faith soars above the fleshly sense
To blazon Thy munificence;

For like an island in a sea,
So has Thy love encompassed me.

Make Thou my love as ocean be,
With Thee sole island in that sea!

Still fresh and green the memory is
When wedding chime told out the bliss

That sealed us man and wife for aye:
I thank Thee, God, for that one day.

I thank Thee now as I did then
For him, my Bayard, prince of men.

But soul of me harps louder yet
Blest burthen of a mother's debt.

Let echo call to echo sweet
Till earth resound and skies repeat,—

Repeat my glad Magnificat,
So Mary hear and joy thereat,

As calling back old, new delight,
With the Lamb in her blessed arms that night.

Praise to Thy Name, Who givest me
To grasp life's sacred mystery,

Divining how my tiny flower
Much more than the whirlwind tongues
Thy power;

And how Thou'st hid in this frail guise
A soul whose home is in the skies.

URSULA AT THE FONT

The Angel

THEY do speak you sweet and fair,
Tiny Ursula!
For they've marked your dimples there,
And the snowy garb you wear,
Tiny Ursula!

What if they could see you now,
Radiant Ursula!
Cleansing stream upon your brow,
Spouse of Heaven through your vow?
Radiant Ursula!

If they saw as angels see,—
Precious Ursula!
All the loveliness of thee,
Whiter than the lilies be,
Precious Ursula!—

Beauty here should flee their sight,
Yes, dear Ursula!—
As the silver stars of night
Flee the day-god's dawning light,—
Yes, my Ursula!

Not if God had given to me,—
Hear it, Ursula!
Sceptre over land and sea,
All the world for custody,—
Hear'st it, Ursula?—

Were it half so sweet a thing,
My own Ursula!—
As to dight thee, daughterling,
For the nuptials of thy King.
Truly, Ursula!

ON PAPA'S KNEE

COME huddle up closer, little one ;
While the sandman comes for you ;
And we'll rock away till your tiny sail
Is afloat on a sea of blue.

And the stars will blink, the fireflies dance,
And the old moon split his sides ;
For it's up and away where the dolphins play
Over the rippling tides.

So trim your sails in the good ship Nod ;
Soon jolly good times there'll be ;
When we enter the Ocean of Dreams ere long
Till the sun comes out of the sea.

And mama will stand on the silvery beach
Till her baby's ship heaves to ;
And a kiss will welcome the rover back
To the Harbor of Love anew.

AT HOME

With Ursula six years of age,
Harry four, and Maud two.

SOFTLY the night wind whispers,
Gently down from the skies
Silken shades are a falling
Like lashes on wearied eyes.

Heaven hangs out its first lantern;
Now there's a gleam in yon cot;
Ere long a thousand lamps glimmer,
Each one a tiny red dot.

Harold make haste from thy business,
Fond hearts are waiting for thee,
There where the love lights glitter,
Sweetest of stars that be.

There is thy Ruth in the doorway;
Ursula's there on the stoop;
Hard by is gentle old grannie,—
Love's little galaxy group.

Oh! 'twas a right royal supper!
Could there be doubt of that?
"Clear away all of the tea things!"
Then for an old time chat.

Here there's a ring of the doorbell;
Mama says, "Who can it be?"
In walks the sainted old pastor,
Who is more welcome than he?

Straightway they cluster around him,
Ursula, Harry, and Maud,
Reverence and love on their features,
Such is the kingdom of God.

Glory of white hairs upon him,
Guest of high honor is he,
Smiling down on the children
Grouped on the floor at his knee.

This is the rich amendment,
Joy for the pangs he must know,
Where evil unsightly doth compass
Haunt where his feet must go.

Swift is the flight of the evening.
Would he might longer stay!
All of them kneel for his blessing,
Homeward he turns his way.

Soon Master Harry is yawning;
Ursula's nodding her head.
"Had we not better be parting?"
"Yes, it is time for bed."

MOTHER'S GARDEN

Tiny Alice

YON cradle is a garden fair :
A tiny flower peepeth there ;
And mother's breath is the breeze that blows ;
And mother's eyes is the sun that glows
All through the summer air.

And softly floats o'er the cradle wall
Lullaby when the nightshades fall ;
And the dews that moisten from above,
Are tear joys fresh from a mother's love—
Boon to that flower small.

Then slumber on in thy cozy dell ;
For the mother gardener minds thee well ;
And the honey fly she'll be that sips
Nectared sweets from thy baby lips
Sweeter no tongue can tell.

THE BLOW

Ursula dies at fourteen years of age.
The Angel Guardian's Song of Triumph.

THE last sigh
And life is done;
And lo! we greet each other, thou and I,
When the prize is won.
Too tantalizing seemed the years and slow
Till thou shouldst see thine angel guide
Unseen of thee till now yet ever at thy side;
And thence be brought to know
How from thy first faint breath
His love for thee was stronger e'en than death.
But here upon this nether shore
At last,—O sweet at last,—
With fear of wreck and ruin past,
And danger ne'er to harry more,
He meets thee face to face
In friendship's strong embrace,—
Here where all love is free to soar
To heights that well had daunted it before.

Come, Ursula, and join along!
Join me in ecstasy of song!
When some great battle's won
And swords be sheathed when it is done,

And the battle smoke has cleared away
Where foe gripped foe in deadly fray,
Does not the victor raise his voice,
Does he not shout for gladness and rejoice?
So shall it be with me :
So shall it be with thee ;
For ours is nobler, higher, truer victory,
That shall remain,—that shall remain,
When time's gone back to its abyss again.
Therefore my cup of bliss is full.
O God ! Thy bounty's wonderful !
Joy ! Joy ! Joy !
Alike, my well beloved, for thee,
Alike for happy, happy me.
Joy ! Joy ! Joy !
That knows not surcease nor alloy.

But come, my precious charge ! Haste we away !
All heaven stands in expectation
To give us splendid jubilation ;
Therefore we may not longer stay.
Grieve not for those on earth
Whom thou so lovest and who gave thee birth !
The blessed household angels there
Shall have good care
Of those so tenderly beloved of thee,
And fill their hearts with God's serenity.

TO A KINDLY SYMPATHIZER

'TIS yet too soon, good sir, for thee to seek
By proffered sympathy ill-timed to halt
This torrent of parental grief. These two
Leave thou with God: 'twere best. Show but thy face!
Nor speak, save sparingly at best! Poor words!
So maladroit! Seem they not vulgar here
In awful presence of so vast a woe?
Leave them with God: 'twere better so. Speak here
By kindly pressure of thy hand, or by
Thine eye's mute eloquence! When heaven sends
An overplus of anguish like to this,
'Twill have its way. Wouldst vainly seek to stay
The surcharged udders of a brooding sky?
E'en nature's storm must spend itself ere calm
Resume her sunshine sway. Better the eye
Suffuse in tears, than that pale, haggard grief,
Unblest by largess of relieving tear,
Unto the soul's grim fortalice retire
To bar the door, and sullen, woo despair.

Come where she lies in snowy raiment garbed,
As when her first great sacramental joy
Made her glad fiancée of Christ the King.
Shrink not, though death be here; for death is kind
To innocence; and all but leaves intact

That tenement of clay where angel soul
Did once abide. How like to counterfeit
Of slumber this her calm repose in death,
With faint suggestion of her wonted smile
On lips here sealed in silence evermore.
Kneel! Breathe thou a prayer, and say farewell!

RESIGNATION

WHY do they bow their heads in calm submission?
Came there some glimpse of heaven's distant
vision?

No, angels hover near where she lies sleeping,
And there is peace where they are vigil keeping.

The atmosphere is laden not with sorrow,
But with such hope as sees a brighter morrow.
"Thy will be done!"—this is their heart's oblation,
And sorrow dries her tears in resignation.

SILVER LINING

DEATH came to bring
Them grief in lieu of gladness ;
But grief took wing
To leave them joy for sadness

THEIR JUBILEE

THIS is their jubilee. Call it a second spring
With birds amid the trees
Warbling glad memories,
When love's Aurora flamed forth, coloring
The laughing rills,
The sleeping valleylets, the hills,
With tinted glory so replete
That Flora's very self were prone
To crave it for her own
Wherewith to garb the favorites of her suite.

It is a Christian couple's jubilee.
Alas! but few there are that see
Their children's children gather near
To kiss away the joyous tear,

And set the coronal of honor there
On age's snowy hair :

Yes, yes,
And bless

The parent hand that reared each heart
To do a splendid manful part ;

Made each dear soul

Aspire to higher goal ;

Made each young mind

Ambition treasure of enduring kind.

Speak out, if there be loftier destiny than this,
Or worthier claim to paradisaal bliss !

Behold ! Man dieth on a gory battlefield

To win abiding fame.

How futile oft his aim !

'Twas self that prompted all his toil,

And this with heaven doth sadly spoil

The fruitage that the harvests yield.

So doth the orator bethink

To forge a link

In glory's gilded chain

That shall through deathless ages still remain ;

But presently time's churlish blow

Layeth his trophy low,

Snatching the "Hic Jacet" from his tomb,

To pave him passage to oblivion's doom.

Fathers ! Mothers of a Christian Family !

Albeit ye

Inhale no incense of world flattery

For deeds unselfish ye have wrought,

For this care not !

Be ye content ! Be ye content !

The upright men and women ye have reared,

The laws of God ye've kept and feared,

The wholesome lessons ye have given

In sight of earth and heaven,—

These are your monument.

Wherefore ring in this jubilee

With heart and tongue of glee,

Till tender memories of the olden times

Reverb with your glad wedding chimes ;

So conjugal fidelity may know

Even on earth below

How service to the Lord is best

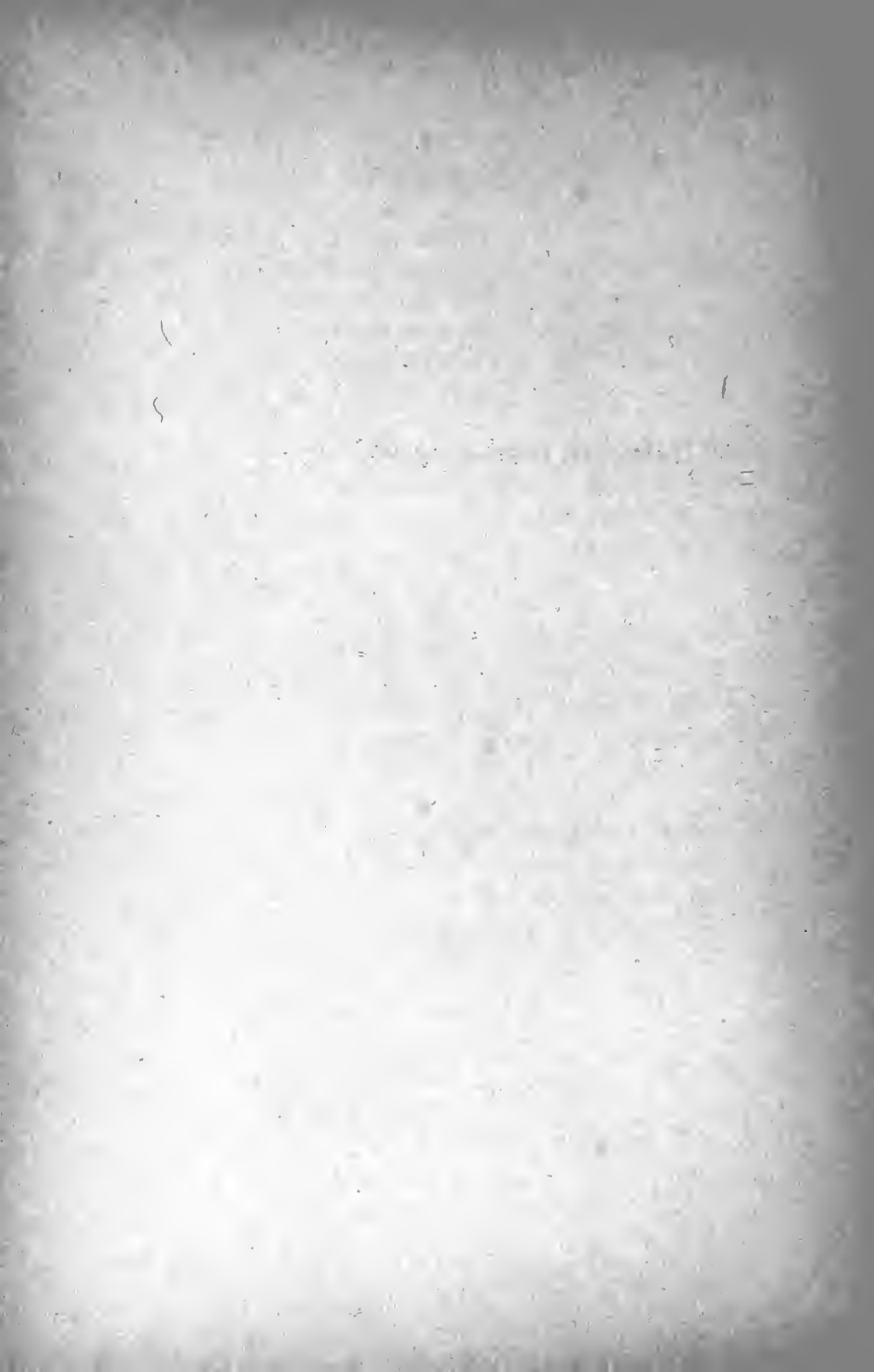
To them that crave true joy and solid rest.

When Dull Care Presses

Dulce est desipere in loco.

Trifling has its proper place.

Horace, Odes, Book 4, 12.



His Only Plea

“**WOULDST** enter here?” Saint Peter said
To the hurdy-gurdy man late dead.
“Art sure thy right of entrance here?
Canst justify thy smirched career?”

“Thy doings past full many chide;
Complaint is loud both far and wide,
How thou didst rack men’s nerves all day
With jargon of thy ceaseless play.

“ ’Tis said how many a tongue did swear;
How many a mortal tore his hair;
And with the hope of gentle pax,
Hath wished thee gone to Halifax.

“The shades of Mozart and Chopin,
With Liszt and others to a man,
Protest thou enter not in here,
Within this hallowed atmosphere.

“Speak up, if thou hast aught to say,
Else turn thy steps another way:
No topsy-turvy ragtime strain
Perturbs the joys which here obtain.”

Outspake the hurdy-gurdy man,—
Within his brain had come a plan.
“Thy speech is just, ’tis even so;
Nor had I thought to work such woe.

“Yet many tongues malign my art;
Nor tell the pleasures I impart.
Where misery dwells and hearts are sad,
Have I not made the children glad?

“They followed me in joyful bands;
They followed me and clapped their hands;
They trooped along to left and right;
Their souls grew merry with delight.

“The Savior did what I have done
To each and every little one.
Hear then my plea,—my only plea,—
The little ones they plead for me.”

To the Bumble-bee

☉, BUMBLE-BEE,
How pompously,
Thou fliest all fields over!
A bumble-bee
Should humble be;
And claim not all the clover.

O, bumble-bee,
How clumsily,
Thou gatherest thy honey!
Not bumble-bee,
But stumble-bee,
Would best suit one so funny.

O, bumble-bee,
Thou grumble-bee!
Leave off thy noise eternal!
I'm sick of thee,
Thou mumble-bee,
With all thy fuss infernal.

O, bumble-bee,
What driveth thee
In every known direction?
I'd nickname thee
"Old Tumble-bee,"—
Thou tumblest to perfection.

O, bumble-bee,
Molest not me;
Keep far away thy stinger;
Or I, may be,
Will crumble thee
If thou presume to linger.

O, bumble-bee,
Then here's to thee,—
Thou stumble-grumble-tumble-bee!
I wish thee glee,
Where'er thou flee,
Old tumble-grumble-stumble-bee!

The Fatuous Fly

LITTLE FLY

Draweth nigh,
Knoweth not that he may die.
Vauntingly,
This to me,
"Catch me if you can," says he.

Sits him there
On my hair,
Woteth not how much I care.
Taketh wing
Round a ring,
Sitteth on my knee, rash thing.

One! two! three!
Where is he?
Orcus knows his shade, may be.
Tale is told;
Him so bold
Death o'ertook ere he grew old.

Evermore
Him she bore
Some fond parent will deplore.

Moral :

Lion's den
Shun ye then,
Ere ye chant your last Amen !

Exit Old Year

A Rondeau

DO you get me, Old Man? 'Tis God speed you, we
pray.

Farewell, Nineteen-Fifteen! we bid you good day!
With fanfare of trumpets and thundering din,
'Twas the glad hand we gave when you bowed your-
self in;

And we tossed up our lids and we shouted "Hurray!"
But you were a hocus, I'm sorry to say,
And all of your roister was only horseplay;
So pack yourself off and let New Year begin—
Do you get me, Old Man?

We'd not treat you harshly; but if you delay,
A fracas there'll be. Do you get me now—eh?
And if you would save yourself needless chagrin,
You'd better be takin' a double-quick spin,
Afore Daddy Time gets to movin' this way—
Do you get me, Old Man?

A Tale of Strife

LET me tell you a tale never told before,—
'Tis a tale dyed red with brutal gore;
And the tale runs thus:
There were two roosters gaudy and proud,
Kept vaunting their prowess over loud.
Oh dear,—what a fuss!

I shall never be sure how their quarrel was begun.
Some badinage first and 'twas only in fun,—
And only in fun.
But words led to words and shortly to blows;
And soon they were pitted up nose to nose
While bright shone the sun.

'Tis a long, long story, how they fought,
With nose to nose up and down that lot
And tails a la guerre.
They parried and thrust and they scraped the dust,
Till each of the fighters was sorely mussed,
But what did they care?

They pecked and pulled, while a middle-aged hen
Kind o' tilted her head and crooned "Amen"

Every now and then.

They ducked and they lunged and they came together
Like masses of cloud in stormy weather,
Again and again.

But when at length they were bruised with cuts,
A broom came down on their occiputs—

And away they fled.

Well, such is my tale,—'tis a tale of tears;
And will oft be told through the passing years
When I am dead——and buried.

A Ballad to the Jingo

WHO are these vaunted patriots brave,
Who'd die our treasured land to save—
To plant their standards in the sky
To wave from freedom's mount on high?
They love their country every minute,—
For what there's in it.

Who are these staunch defenders, say,
Who'd point their swords and lead the fray?
Who'd shield from perils lurking near
Columbia's hallowed soil thrice dear?
They'd guard their country every minute,—
For what there's in it.

Who are these Tells beyond compare,
That yearn to breathe their native air,—
Whose pulses thrill with quick'ning blood
Each moment for their country's good?
Oh, how their pulses beat each minute,—
For what there's in it!

Still waters ever deeply flow :
True worth courts never dazzling show.
Weep not, fair Liberty,—not dead
Thy children all who fought and bled,—
Who sought and seek not every minute,—
For what there's in it.

Tale of Aunt Ruth

NOW perhaps you will not believe me;
But I'm telling the honest truth,
When I tell you this little story
Which I heard from your old Aunt Ruth.

The story I'm going to tell you,
It happened a long time ago.
'Twas winter time I remember,
And the ground was white with snow.

There were three kings, as I heard it,
Who learned of the Christ Child's birth;
And they made up their minds to find Him,
If they traveled all over the earth.

But now it was hard for these Wise Men
To find their way so far;
So the Lord directed their footsteps,
And let down a beautiful star.

Now the stars,—they had known what was wanted;
And some were exceedingly bright;
Yet the Lord, He wanted the brightest;
And the one that would give the most light.

As each of them wished to be chosen,
They just twinkled, and glittered, and shone;
But the Lord, He selected the brightest,
And He chose but a single one.

Of course some others were jealous;
And up to this very day
You can never see them a shining;
They went so far away.

Now you needn't believe this story;
Though I know 'tis the sober truth;
For if it were not, it would never
Have been told by your old Aunt Ruth.



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